IDW

#2 • REG CVR

KIETH
MESSNER-LOEBS

THE MAXX
MAXXIMIZED

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THE STORY SO FAR:
AFTER HELPLESSLY SHIFTING BETWEEN THE URBAN CITY AND THE SAVAGE OUTBACK, MAXX PURSUED A BLACK ISZ THROUGH ALLEYS AND OVER BUILDINGS, UNTIL HE PUMMELED MR. GONE ATOP A GAS STATION LIGHTING CANOPY... WITH INNOCENT GAS CUSTOMERS CLUELESS AS TO WHAT'S TAKING PLACE...

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THREE WHOLE WEEKS OF **DIETING**... COTTAGE CHEESE AND FRUIT PLATES AND YOGURT...

...AND SHE'S **GAINED** FIVE POUNDS?

MAYBE THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THE FRIDGE, SOMETHING **UNFATTENING**... SOMETHING NICE...

Oh... POOP!

SUGAR

SALT

MEEP!

GOLA

FRESH!

MOO COW

LOWFAT MILK!

KAT FOO

MEEP MEEP MEEP MEEP MEEP

Snatchhh!

MEEP

NOTHING EVER HAPPENS TO ME.

I MEAN I GET UP, I GO TO SUMMER SCHOOL FOR *STUPID* ALGEBRA, I WORK ON MY CAR... NOTHING.

LIKE TODAY. I'M LATE FOR THIS *CPR* CLASS I'M TEACHING FOR EXTRA P.E. CREDIT AND I GOT TO STOP FOR *GAS* AND IT'S ABOUT A THOUSAND DEGREES OUT, BUT THAT'S NOTHING *SPECIAL!*

I JUST WISH SOMETHING *WEIRD* WOULD HAPPEN... REALLY *SHAKE* MY LIFE UP.

1.19 9/10
1.29 9/10
2.39 9/10

NO SMOKING

SELF

PLEASE PAY FIRST.

SPLOSH!

NOT LIKE WHAT HAPPENED TO *GLORIE*, OF COURSE.

I WENT TO SEE HER AT THE HOSPITAL A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO. THAT WAS KIND OF *GROSS*.

SELF

SHE'S ALL BANDAGED UP AND CAN'T TALK GOOD AND THERE'S THESE *BURN MARKS* ON HER WRISTS.

MADE ME FEEL BAD.

SHE SAID THEY THINK THEY CAN SAVE HER FINGERS.

MY DAD SAYS IT HAPPENED 'CAUSE SHE WAS A *TRAMP*. BUT I DON'T THINK SO.

THINGS JUST *HAPPEN* IS ALL. BUT NOT TO ME.

9 9/10
9 9/10
9 9/10

THAT'S FUNNY. THERE'S AN OLD WOMAN IN THAT STATION WAGON WHO LOOKS JUST LIKE *MY GRANDMOTHER*.

IN FACT, THEY *ALL* DO. THEY ALL LOOK *JUST* ALIKE.

HUH.

AND THERE'S A *BLACK TARP* OVER THE STATION.

I NEVER NOTICED THAT.

SUPER GAS TRY IT T

IT ALMOST LOOKS *ALIVE!*

AND IT'S *SLIPPING DOWN*, COVERING THE *STATION*...

SUPER GAS! TRY IT TODAY!

WEIRD.

MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF *AUTOMATIC SUNSHADE.*

1.19
1.29
1.39
SELF

BUT YOU CAN'T *SEE* TO PUMP GAS IN THERE.

WHAT IF THERE'S A *SWITCH...?*

IF I WAS TO *TUG* ON THIS THING *REALLY HARD...*

FOOOSSSH!

FOOO

OH, I GET IT! IT'S THAT GUY'S *CAPE!*

THAT'S A *RELIEF!*

I WAS AFRAID I *BROKE* IT!

THAUD

'COURSE, NOW I GOT TWO BIG GUYS, *FIGHTING*, ON THE HOOD OF MY CAR.

GIVE IT UP, BR'ER LAPP!N! YOU...GASP...KNOW JULIE WINTERS IS THE ONE I WANT! SHE'S...WHEEZZ... THE STRONG ONE...

THE ONE WHO PULLS ...HANT... YOUR STRINGS!

IT'S KIND OF *NEAT*, ACTUALLY.

UHHH... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

AND WHO THE HELL *ARE* YOU?

KUM-

YOU REALLY DON'T REMEMBER ANYTH'NG 'MPORTANT, DO YOU, BR'ER LAPP'N?

I'M MR. GONE!...A STUDENT OF THE MYST'C ARTS!

UNFORTUNATELY, AN UNTALENTED STUDENT, OR I WOULDN'T HAVE TO KEEP SHOOT'NG FOOLS L'IKE YOU!

HEY! PUT THAT DOWN, OR I'LL-

KRATTCHH!

I THOUGHT I SAW A WOMAN IN THERE!

NOW SURRENDER, HOPP'NG-BOY, OR TH'S CHARM'NG YOUNG CH'PPIE 'S ADDED TO MY SCORE!

CRUNCH

MY HOSTAGE. YOU KILLED MY HOSTAGE!

YOUK! LLEDMYH OSTAGEYOUK !LLEDMYHOST AGEYOUK!L LED

WHUMP!

NEVER DO THAT AGAIN!

OUCHIE.

UMM...DO YOU WANT ME TO CALL FOR AN AMBULANCE OR SOMETHING?

BROTHER, NOTH!NG'S EASY.

THAT WAS REALLY SMART, HOW YOU REALIZED THAT WAS MY *CPR PRACTICE DUMMY*... *uh*...

YOU *DID* REALIZE THAT WAS MY CPR PRACTICE DUMMY, RIGHT, MISTER?

RIGHT...?

A DUMMY?

UH. RIGHT.

YAAAAAA!

IT WAS THE LITTLE OLD LADIES. THEY MUST'VE JUMPED OUT OF THE STATION WAGON FROM BEFORE.

I WAS STARTING TO THINK IT WAS GETTING PRETTY *HAZARDOUS* AROUND HERE.

WELL, IT WAS NICE TO MEET YOU... I GOTTA BE GOING NOW...

HE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING. BUT THEN HE WAS PRETTY *BUSY*.

I GUESS *HE'S* THE SORT OF GUY THINGS HAPPEN TO *ALL* THE TIME.

YAAAAA!

TOO... MANY... CAN'T FIGHT THEM ALL...

BLACKING OUT... LOST TOO MUCH BLOOD... PAIN... HAVE TO FIND... JULIE...

I GOTTA DATE WITH AN ANGEL...

AH-HA!

CRUNCH!

THERE!

AND THAT SHOULD COVER YOU NICELY.

AFTER ALL, WE DON'T WANT THE LOCALS SEEING GRANNIES CLIPPED TO TRASH BINS BY THEIR TEETH...

ESCAPED!
IT FEELS GOOD TO RUN AND LEAP AGAIN!
TO FEEL THE SOFT LOAM UNDER MY HEELS!
BAD DOLL.
EVEN HER VOICE IS DIFFERENT.
WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO HER?
TO KNOW THAT I AM KING IN THIS SAV-AGE PLACE ...BUT EVEN A KING MUST HAVE HIS JUNGLE QUEEN!
THERE SHE IS...BUT CHANGED...
THIS IS A BAD DOLL. IT KEEPS TELLING ME THINGS I DON'T WANT TO HEAR!
AND IF THIS BAD DOLL DOESN'T SHUT UP, I'M GOING TO BRUSH ITS HAIR RIGHT OUT!
IF I CAN JUST FIND HER, THEN EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT...

ELSEWHERE, ON THE PASTEL, DECAYING, ART DECO SIDE OF TOWN...

SPAWN SUCKS

BULL RUBB

I RAN INTO YOUR FRIEND MAXX TODAY, JULIE.

HE STILL HASN'T GOT A CLUE THAT YOU'RE THE KEY TO ALL THIS. HE THINKS HE'S SOME KIND OF SUPERHERO ON THIS WORLD. CAN YOU IMAGINE?

I KILLED HIM, OF COURSE. SHOT HIM AND LOCKED HIM IN A DUMPSTER WITH A HANDFUL OF THE DARK ONES. THEY TURN MEAT-EATERS WHEN YOU BRING THEM OVER. DID YOU KNOW THAT?

THE UNSODA

BULL

POP

POP

POP

AHHH... LIFE IS GOOD!

THE !SES ARE PRETTY !NTERESTING...

SPLAT!

D!D YOU KNOW THAT TO HUMANS THEY APPEAR AS WHATEVER YOU DRESS THEM AS?

THAT'S WHY I SET UP SHOP !N TH!S OLD COSTUME WAREHOUSE... PRETTY CLEVER, EH?

OF COURSE, THE BULLDOG JAR RUBBER FACTORY UPSTAIRS ST!LL SMELLS OF DECAY!NG RUBBER...

BUT I TH!NK THAT JUST ADDS TO THE AMB!ENCE, DON'T YOU?

NOT THAT YOU'RE !N ANY POS!T!ON TO COMPLAIN...

!N FACT, I CAN DO ANYTH!NG TO YOU I WANT...

Oh, GAWWWD!

LET ME GUESS! I'M SUPPOSED TO BE DRESSED AS EVERY *CHEERLEADER, PROM QUEEN* AND *CIRCUS ACROBAT* WHO *EVER* TURNED YOU DOWN FOR A DATE!

AND AS I BEG AND WHIMPER YOU FINALLY ACHIEVE SOME SORT OF TAWDRY *SEXUAL REVENGE?*

WELL, SO MUCH FOR THAT PLAN!

MEEP! MEEP!

IF ALL THIS BAROQUE POSTURING IS SUPPOSED TO BE *THREATENING* ME, IT'S PRETTY *LAME-O.*

I MEAN, YOU CAN *KILL* ME, SURE...

SO CAN EVERY CRACKHEAD ON MY BLOCK...BUT YOU SURE AREN'T *SCARING* ME!

A *TOOTH*... FROM ONE OF THOSE LITTLE *MONSTERS* HE KEEPS AROUND... MUST BE *SHARP!*

SMACK SMACK SMACK

SHUT UP!

I'M TRYING TO THINK!

NOW WHERE WAS I?

OH, YES. PLAN TWO!

TRUST ME. YOU WILL FEAR ME!

I DOUBT IT.

YOU DON'T HAVE A *CLUE* WHO I AM.

KEEP HIM TALKING...*SAW* THROUGH THESE *STRAPS*...

BUT I CAN SEE THROUGH *YOU* LIKE *GLASS*, PAL!

YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW YOU? I'VE STALKED YOU!

SO? YOU SEE ME AS SOME LITTLE MISS *PERFECT* ...SOME *MADONNA* TO BE SEDUCED AND *ABSORBED!*

ACTUALLY, I'M PRETTY FLAWED. I'VE GOT A FAT STOMACH AND *CHAFF* MARKS WHERE MY JEANS CUT IN AND BAD BREATH FROM EATING THE WRONG STUFF! AND MY UNDERARMS ARE STUBBLY!

YOU'VE GOT A *PROBLEM* WITH *WOMEN!*

HOW PERCEPTIVE! DID YOU FIGURE THAT OUT WHEN I KIDNAPPED YOU... OR WHEN I TIED YOU UP WITH LEATHER STRAPS?

OF COURSE I'VE GOT A PROBLEM WITH WOMEN!

EVERYONE HAS A PROBLEM WITH WOMEN... BECAUSE WOMEN TAUNT AND TEASE! BECAUSE THEY ARE ATTRACTIVE AND THEN THEY PUNISH YOU FOR BEING ATTRACTED!

DO YOU DENY IT? AFTER ALL, I'M NOT THE ONE WHO WEARS UNDERWEAR OUTSIDE HER CLOTHES!

YOU CLAIM TO BE A "PRO-SEX FEMINIST"! YOU QUOTE CAMILLE PAGLIA... ENDLESSLY, I MIGHT ADD.

BUT WOULD A FEMINIST OF ANY STRIPE BE SO DELIBERATELY RISK-TAKING? OR ARE YOU ONLY A FEMINIST WHEN IT SUITS YOU?

YOU DROPPED OUT OF COLLEGE, SET UP THIS "FREE-LANCE SOCIAL WORK" OF YOURS, STARTED BAILING PEOPLE OUT OF JAIL, TRYING TO REFORM THEM...

YOU'RE NEARLY BROKE, SURROUNDED BY DANGEROUS, DESPERATE MEN... AND LOOK WHERE IT'S GOTTEN YOU!

SO THIS IS *MY* FAULT?

YOU *BROKE* INTO *MY LOCKED* HOUSE AND *KIDNAPPED* ME! THIS HAS *NOTHING* TO DO WITH THE *CLOTHES* I WEAR!

THIS HAS TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT YOU'RE *TWISTED* AS A CORKSCREW, AND LOOKING TO FIND SOMEONE... WOMEN, FEMINISM, PAGLIA, ME... TO BLAME IT ON!

SURE I TEST THE *LIMITS*...SO *WHAT?* QUIT WHINING LIKE A *BROKEN DOLL* AND GET ON WITH IT!

ARE YOU SURE THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT? I CAN TELL YOU THINGS, JULIE WINTERS, THINGS YOU'VE TRIED TO FORGET.

THINGS ABOUT ME, YOURSELF...EVEN THE MAXX. THIS WHOLE ELABORATE FICTION YOU'VE BUILT UP TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE TRUTH.

DO YOU REMEMBER SPIRIT ANIMALS, JULIE? DO YOU REMEMBER...?

THIS DOLL IS TELLING ME THINGS I DON'T WANT TO HEAR! AND IF IT DOESN'T SHUT UP...

...I'M GONNA BRUSH ITS HEAD RIGHT OFF!

...GETTING YOUR OWN SPIRIT ANIMAL? DO YOU REMEMBER WHERE YOU WERE? WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE?

AND WHAT THE ANIMAL'S NAME WAS?

IF THIS DOLL DOESN'T SHUT UP...!

...I'M GONNA BRUSH AND BRUSH AND BRUSH...

YOU WERE NEVER ABLE TO ACCEPT THE OTHER PLANE, JULIE... NEVER ABLE TO REVEL IN IT LIKE I AM... INSTEAD YOU HIDE IN THIS FANTASY! REMEMBER, JULIE? IT'S...

UNTIL I BRUSH OFF IT'S...

...ALL IN YOUR...

...HEAD.

DEAD.

I AWOKE FROM THE DAYDREAM OF THE WILD PLACE AND TEETH WERE AT MY THROAT!

SO I AWOKE AND SLEW. BUT JULIE IS STILL KIDNAPPED AND THE JUNGLE QUEEN IS INSANE!

I DIDN'T PROTECT EITHER OF THEM. I FAILED.

I WISH IT WAS TIME FOR CHEERS, BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S TIME FOR VENGEANCE!

NEXT MONTH

JUNGLE FLOWERS GROWN IN BLOOD!